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34
LETTERS TO LIBERATIONISTS.

BY

CLERICUS.

Reprinted from THE WESTERN MAIL.

WESTMINSTER:

P. S. KING & SON, CANADA BUILDING, KING STREET.

1884.

Price Threepence.

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INTRODUCTION.

The following *Letters to Liberationists* made their first appearance in the columns of *The Western Mail*, immediately after the campaign of the Liberation Society in Wales in the autumn of 1883. With the exception of the letter to Dr. Rees, which has been re-cast in consequence of further communications from him, they are re-printed very much as they were originally written. The object which the *Letters* have in view is to discuss the arguments adduced by the various speakers in support of the Liberation policy. As very little was said by them about the principles involved in Establishment, or the consequences likely to follow from Disestablishment, the reader must not expect to find in these *Letters* any systematic or exhaustive treatment of these important questions. The speakers addressed themselves for the most part to the more congenial topic of Disendowment, and endeavoured to make out—first, that the State has a perfect right to disendow on the ground of its absolute proprietorship of what is called Church property; and, secondly, that there is good ground why the State should exercise this right in the case of the Church in Wales on account of her assumed failure to do all that she ought to have done or was intended to do.

Mr. Dillwyn's motion addresses itself solely to this latter ground. Without referring in any way to the principle of Establishment as in itself wrong, and without specifically affirming the doctrine of State proprietorship, it asserts that "as the Church of England in Wales has failed to fulfil its professed object as a means of promoting the interests of the Welsh people, and ministers to only a small minority of the population, its continuance as an Established Church is an anomaly and injustice which ought not to exist."

In speaking in support of his motion at Swansea, Mr. Dillwyn confined himself wholly to the question of numbers; he endeavoured to prove that the Church ministered only to a small minority. Whether he has succeeded in establishing this point the public can best judge. But even if he has done so, it is surely incumbent upon him to prove a great deal more. He must show that the Church has been supplied with the means whereby to fulfil her professed object, and that her failure is due to a misapplication of those funds, or, at all events, to an ineffective use of them. He has not entered into this subject at all: he has not even alluded to it as an element to be taken into account. He institutes a charge against the Church, and shuts out all the evidence bearing on the question with the exception of that which he derives from counting heads. Yet every one who has paid any attention to the subject is aware to what an extent the asserted failure of the Church to fulfil her professed

object is due to the deficiency of her resources. Mr. Fisher was the only speaker (as far as I remember) who made any allusion to this subject. He stated at Cardiff that her parochial income was about 230,000*l.* a year, to be divided between 954 benefices, and he admitted that the sum was a small one for the maintenance of the Incumbents and Curates at work in the Principality. But a mere statement of the lump sum which the Church has in the present furnishes in reality a very imperfect indication of the extent to which her operations have been affected by her financial position. What is further required is to note her position in this respect in by-gone times, both as regards the amount and the distribution of her resources. Poor as the Church in Wales now is, she is rich as compared with what she has been. In 1831, for instance, the parochial clergy had only 155,000*l.* at their disposal, and, though the population was smaller, the area was the same, and *area* has a great deal to do with the difficulties of the Church in Wales. But her position in 1831 was infinitely better than in the early part of the last century, when the income of the Diocese of St. David's, comprising five out of the six counties of South Wales, did not exceed 10,000*l.*, and when the Church fell into a state of disorganisation through the unavoidable evils of plurality and non-residence. Then again, as regards the distribution of her resources, it has to be noted that they fell almost to zero in the very quarter where during the last century they have been most needed, viz. in the South Wales mineral basin. It may be said in answer to all this that the failure alleged against the Church is not in respect to her endowments, which are palpably inadequate, but that she has not sufficiently supplemented them by the voluntary liberality of her members. There is no denying this; but whether this forms a justification for depriving her of her resources is a question that is, at all events, open to argument. No one has yet attempted to ascertain the amount to which voluntaryism has contributed either towards the endowments as they now stand or towards the present current expenditure on Church work. Yet this is an important element in the inquiry as to the Church's conduct. There are, again, other matters to be taken into account, such as the bilingual difficulty, which has pressed with special severity on the Church in the past. A thorough discussion of these topics would require a larger space than we can give to them in this Introduction, and I have no further object in alluding to them than to show that they ought to find a place in the kind of judicial inquiry which Mr. Dillwyn proposes to institute against the Church. She is, at all events, entitled to a hearing, and the attempt to snuff her out by an off-hand assertion that the Welsh are a nation of Nonconformists, or by the production of one-sided and unverified statistics, is a proceeding wholly unworthy of so grave an issue.

I.—TO L. LL. DILLWYN, ESQ. M.P.

SIR,

At the Liberationist Meeting held at Swansea on the 14th November, 1883, you are reported to have stated that the number of Church people in Wales (children under four years of age omitted) was 142,639, which you estimated as somewhat over a ninth, though it is really about a seventh, part of the population. You arrive at this result by the simple process of making such deductions from the gross population as commend themselves to your judgment, and then assigning the residue to the Church. Thus, taking the population in 1881 at 1,343,228, you deduct a fifth for the children under 4, leaving a disposable balance of 1,074,583. From this you deduct the various Nonconformist bodies as follows:—Congregationalists, 253,016; Calvinistic Methodists, 250,274; Baptists, 144,307; Wesleyans, 78,580; Primitive Methodists, 17,767; and other sects, 8000; making up a total of 751,944, which, deducted from the disposable population, leaves a balance of 322,639. Then, further, deducting 30,000 Roman Catholics and 150,000 of no religion, there is left for the Church 142,639.

Your process of calculation proceeds on a singular basis. You surely do not expect Churchmen to accept as evidence against themselves statistical returns of which they know nothing, and which they have no opportunity of verifying. We are not called upon to impugn their accuracy; but we are entitled to ignore them when they are used for hostile purposes as you are now using them. Assuming, however, that the returns are correct, we may further desire to know whether you have used them correctly. In as far as the returns permit me to check your statement, you have not done so. You have omitted to deduct from the Congregationalists 7579 who live in England, and from the Calvinistic Methodists 10,570 who live in

Monmouthshire, and the congregations of some 40 chapels situated in the other border counties, numbering perhaps 8000 worshippers. The other bodies do not, as far as I can ascertain, make returns of their total strength. Then, further, you have understated the population in 1881 by about 16,000, and you have omitted to allow for any increase of the population between the date of the Census and that of the returns you quote—a difference possibly of 18,000. You have largely overestimated the number of the children under 4, who form not a fifth but less than a ninth of the population: the excess amounts to no less than 120,417, according to my estimate. Allowing for these various errors, you should have stated the number of Churchmen at about 320,000, or more than double the number you have assigned to them. I am not myself either asserting or denying that this is the true number: I am simply pointing out the effect of your own figures. You state, in apology for having adopted this method of calculation, that you can find no return of the Church population. The Church does not pretend to make such a return, for the simple reason that it would be impossible to make it with accuracy, or at all events to prove its accuracy to the satisfaction of adversaries. Churchmen have expressed themselves ready to concur in the only plan by which the information can be gained, namely, by an exhaustive official census. Nonconformists will have nothing to say to such a plan, and I commend their prudence in this matter. They are wise in their generation.

But though there are no returns by which you can ascertain the number of Church adherents, there is no difficulty in judging whether your estimate approximates to the truth. You have arrived at your conclusion by a mere arithmetical process without applying to it any of the tests which lie open to your observation. Your estimate would allow of an adult population of about 100,000 above the age of 15, and 42,600 between the ages of 4 and 15. It seems difficult to reconcile these numbers with the statements of the Bishop of St. David's in his recent

charge. In his diocese, containing about a third of the population of Wales, the Sunday scholars in 1883 numbered nearly 33,000, the confirmation candidates above 2000 annually, and the communicants 33,560. Assuming that the same proportion prevails elsewhere, it would follow that the communicants alone would absorb the whole adult population, and that more than two-thirds of the population above 4 are in the Sunday schools. With regard to confirmation candidates, the Bishop states that the proportion in his diocese is as nearly as possible the same as that in the diocese of London, and not much below the ratio observable in certain other English dioceses. I may further draw your attention to his statement that the number of communicants is largest in the county which is most distinctively Welsh, viz. Cardiganshire—a statement which directly conflicts with yours that “if the rich people, the English, and the foreigners were to go out of Wales, there would be no Church possible.” There are also indications furnished by other sources of information. The Education Report for 1881 stated that 732 out of 1622 school-departments were maintained by Churchmen, though the course of events of late years has militated very much against voluntary schools. The Registrar-General’s Report for 1883 stated that in the Welsh counties (which include Monmouthshire) 4150 marriages were solemnised at church, as against 2918 at Nonconformist chapels, and 3870 at the Register Office. The Report of the Departmental Committee showed that out of 6000 scholars in the intermediate schools, whether endowed or unendowed, whose religious professions were specified, nearly one-half were Churchmen. We might further appeal to the activity displayed in every department of Church work—the increase of churches and of Clergy—the large sums expended on the increase of church accommodation—the acknowledged advance which has been made within the last thirty years in the popularity and efficiency of the Church, and we may ask whether this is consistent with the idea that the Church has retrograded during that period to the extent of some 50 per cent.; for this would be the case if your estimate were correct, as a com-

parison of it with the returns of the Census of 1851 would show.

I have thus shown cause why Churchmen should question the correctness of your estimate. Should it prove as wide of the mark as I believe it to be, you will have injured rather than advanced the cause you have espoused. If the Parliamentary leader of the Liberationist party in Wales is convicted of an attempt to unduly depreciate and misrepresent the work of the Church, I venture to predict that it will earn for her the sympathy, not only of her friends, but of many outside her pale.

CLERICUS.

II.—TO THE REV. DR. ROBERTS, PONTYPRIDD.

REV. SIR,

To yourself was entrusted the responsible task of laying the foundation stone of the Liberationist position, by proving to the satisfaction of the Conference held at Swansea on the 13th Nov. that what is called Church property is really State property, inasmuch as it was given by the State, or rather was not *given* in the true sense of the term, but simply entrusted to the hands of certain administrators, from whom it may be re-demanded at the sole will and pleasure of the State, either with or without the assignment of any reason for so doing. In order to make good this position it has always been deemed by Liberationists essential to show that Church property is the creation of *Statute* law—that is, of an Act of Parliament or some other express ordinance. This is what you undertook to show, and what you have, in my humble opinion, failed to show. I trust you will believe me when I say that I do not question your learning, still less your honesty of purpose; but I shrewdly suspect that you have relied on that broken reed, Miall's *Title Deeds*, and that you have not instituted an independent inquiry into the subject

you were dealing with. I propose to show, in the first place, the precariousness of the evidence on which you rest your case, and, in the second place, the fallaciousness of the conclusions you draw from that evidence.

Your evidence is based upon the record of certain acts done by two of the Anglo-Saxon Kings—Offa and Ethelwulf. You say that “Offa made a law whereby he gave unto the Church the tithes of all his kingdom,” and this by way of expiation for murdering Ethelbert; and your only difficulty in respect to this supposed law arises out of your belief that it did not apply to the whole country, but only to Mercia. You then pass on to Ethelwulf. His father having, as you are reported to say, “established” the Heptarchy (a printer’s error, no doubt, yet Liberationists make strange mistakes as to the meaning of the word “established”), and thus united all England under his sway (Wales, of course, included as part of the Heptarchy, for this is necessary to your argument), Ethelwulf proceeded to “make a law for the granting of tithes of all the kingdom to the Church.” Hence, as you believe, the origin of tithes.

Now with regard to Offa there is no evidence that he ever passed any “law” whatever on the subject. We are told by a chronicler that he himself made a gift, but nothing is said about a *law* to the effect that others should give. And what did he give? Not the tenth part of Mercia, but the tenth part of *his own property* (*rerum suarum*), probably meaning his royal domain, or perhaps his personal estate; nor, again, necessarily *tithe*, in the sense in which we understand the term, *i.e.* the tenth part of the yearly *produce* of the land, but just as likely the tenth part of the land itself. Whether his gift, whatever it may have been, was made by way of expiation for his crime, is more than I am able to say. But if it were so, it tells against your argument, for it involves the idea that Offa made expiation by giving away what did not belong to him—a free-handed way of doing business, which finds, no doubt, admirers and imitators in all ages, but which is not likely to have been acceptable either to the Church or to the people. Turning to Ethelwulf, he again

passed no law ; the document which is ascribed to him is in the nature of a deed of gift. Nor, again, did he give tithe (as we understand the term). You yourself are a witness against yourself in this respect, for you quote the deed of gift to the effect that he gave a tenth part of his "kingdom," and a kingdom is a very different thing from tithe. But, in truth, Ethelwulf's deed does not say kingdom, but it says "land" (*terra*) ; and that it was somehow or other concerned with land appears conclusively from another document attributed to him, which specifies that in pursuance of the above promise he gives 20 hides of land at Wanborough to Winchester Cathedral. It is by no means certain, after all, that he gave the land itself ; for in the passage you cite there is a clause for which you substitute asterisks, but which is supposed to contain the gist of the matter, namely, that the tenth part of the land was to be freed from various exactions and services which went by the general name of *witeræden*, whatever that may mean. This, I say, was the nature of the gift. It was, as Mr. Kemble, the highest authority on this subject, tells us in his *Saxons in England*, ii. 485, "a charitable act of *enfranchisement*" extending to one acre out of ten. In this case it had nothing whatever to do with tithe.

So far for your facts—now for your reasonings. We will suppose, for the nonce, that the acts to which you have referred really established tithes. But do you, as a patriotic Welshman, believe that our forefathers endowed our Welsh churches in obedience to any Saxon king whatever ? Or do you believe that our Church endowments are due to any Act of Parliament whatever ? There is a hiatus in your argument which it would be well for you to attempt to fill in. I observe in all Liberationist utterances a significant silence as to the history of the Church in Wales. The truth is that it is rather a hard nut for Liberationists to crack. Our Church foundations run back to a period long prior to the introduction of English law into Wales. Their names alone, such as Llanelly, Llandebie, and a hundred others, are evidence of their hoar antiquity ; for I need not inform you that they belong to an age when the custom of

dedicating churches to apostles and saints was as yet unknown, and when churches were called by the names of their founders, or of some one who had died for the faith at the spot where the church was built. You may say, indeed, that the churches do not imply endowments. To this I answer, that the churches would not have had a continuous life of some twelve centuries without endowments, and that Welsh tradition assumes the existence of endowments in Britain, inasmuch as it attributes (if my memory does not deceive me) the origin of endowments in Britain to Cunedda, whose descendants founded a large number of our churches. Still, you may say that a good many churches in Wales have been founded since its subjection to Norman or English sway, and that these churches were built and the tithe given in obedience to the law of Ethelwulf or some other such enactment. But you cannot prove this. On the other hand, I am prepared to cite, if needful, the very words of the original deed by which one of our churches was endowed under a Norman Lord Marcher and a Norman bishop, and in these words there is nothing to indicate that it was in obedience to any law whatever; it was the voluntary act of the lord of the manor.*

In conclusion, I beg to call your attention to a fallacy which runs through your own and, I may add, through the whole Liberationist argument. It is this—that legislation about tithe implies State origin of tithe. It really implies nothing of the sort; it rather implies the reverse. Do you, for instance, hold that legislation about rent is evidence that the State gave the land, or rather lends the land, and retains the right to reclaim it, simply because the State protects the owners by enabling them to recover their rent? The truth is that all the acts of the Saxon kings, of which Mr. Miall makes so much, imply the *previous existence* of tithe, and, therefore, have nothing whatever to do with its *origination*, except in so far as they tended to encourage and support the existing practice. Hence in course of time the payment of tithe became (as I suppose it did

* This document is quoted in the Letter (VI.) to Mr. Henry Richard.

become) part of the common law of the land, and this is sufficient to account for the *uniformity* to which you advert in the earlier part of your address—a uniformity (be it observed) combined with *diversity* to such an extent as to be wholly inconsistent with the idea that it was the result of statute law, which would have enforced *rigid* uniformity. Common law, however, will not suit your purpose ; it would tell against you, and hence your attempt to bring the origination of tithe home to statute law. Even your own authority, Dean Prideaux, does not pretend that the law of Offa *originated* tithes. All that he says is that it gave the *civic right* to them.

CLERICUS.

III.—TO ALFRED ILLINGWORTH, Esq. M.P.

SIR,

In your address at Llanelly you are reported as saying :—
 “There is no such a thing as a Church in the country recognised in law, and which any lawyer would tell them had a legal existence.” Whether this report is correct or not I cannot say ; but I see no reason to doubt that it is so, because it fits in with your general theory as to the legal position of the Church. It sounds indeed somewhat strange to find you saying that there is no such thing in the country as a Church “recognised in law,” considering that this is the meaning of the expression so odious to the ear of a Liberationist, “by law established.” But what you probably intended to convey to your hearers was, that the Church, as a Church, has no corporate existence, so that, for instance, if a person were to leave a sum of money in his will to the Church, the bequest would be null and void. I do not demur to this statement ; yet I do not hesitate to say that, standing alone, it is calculated to mislead nine-tenths of your audience. And for this reason, that, though it is the truth, it is not the *whole* truth. You say that the Church is not a corporation.

You do not, apparently, go on to say that it is an *aggregation of corporations*. I think you ought to have explained this ; because, though most people are aware that such bodies as deans and chapters are corporations, they are not aware that every single beneficed clergyman is in the eye of the law a corporation—a *corporation sole*, as it is termed—and that it is by virtue of this position that he is entitled to inherit property from his predecessors, to hold it during his incumbency, and to devolve it on his successors. Now this, if it be true, alters the whole complexion of the thing, and not only invalidates your statement at Llanelly from the *suppressio veri* involved in it, but also militates against your whole theory and against some of your utterances at the other meetings.

I. You wish to prove that church endowments emanated from the State, and were the result of express legislation. I ask whether it is consistent with this idea that every church should have a separate and independent foundation, and that there should be wide variations in the amount of the endowments and in the size of the parishes? Surely the State would either have made the Church a corporation and held her responsible for the funds committed to her charge, or it would have taken the matter in its own hands, and paid the Clergy just as it pays the officers of the army and navy. On the other hand, the fact that each church is a separate foundation chimes in with the idea that the whole is the result of individual action, each landowner having made his own arrangements, according to the size of his estate or the convenience of his tenants.

II. You wish to make out that the Church is a mere congeries of fortuitous atoms, incapable of holding property, and entirely dependent on the sufferance of the State. This appears from your reply to Mr. Llewelyn at the Swansea meeting :—"When you gave your money to endow a church, you gave it to the nation, and the nation took it on its own conditions." Mr. Llewelyn did not give his money to the nation, but to a certain corporation sole for certain specified uses ; he did this in accordance with the conditions which the nation has laid down for

securing such property, namely, by a legal document and by consecration. He, therefore, has a right to claim the protection of the State, inasmuch as his act is recognised by the State. Until I am better informed I hold that the legal title of the land and endowments of a church is to the full as sound as the title of a Nonconformist chapel which has been conveyed to certain trustees. The State has the *power*, of course, to override its own regulations, and to seize on church and chapel alike. But the State, like every individual, is supposed to have a conscience, and to exercise its power in subjection to the laws of substantial justice. Liberationists are aware of the difficulty they would experience in persuading the nation to commit a palpable and flagrant wrong; and so they have invented an ingenious, but not over-scrupulous, mode of glossing over the true character of the course they wish the nation to adopt, by maintaining that not only the ancient endowments should be seized because they were given *by* the State, but also the modern endowments because they were given *to* the State, and for the simple reason that the Church is not a corporation. And when any one ventures, as Mr. Llewelyn did, to demur to the diversion of his gift from the purpose to which it was appointed, the Liberationist holds up his hands in amazement and exclaims :—" Oh ! the sweet simplicity of these Churchmen ! They fancy that their trust deeds are of some value ; little do they know that they are not worth the parchment on which they are written. The funds are not yours, but ours."

III. You wish, further, to make out that the Church has no power of restricting its buildings and endowments to certain uses. You say at Swansea that " all persons are members of the Established Church, and that you yourself are just as much a member as Mr. Llewelyn, inasmuch as the law makes no distinction." There is a sense in which this statement may be accepted as true, and it is this :—Any person living in this country is entitled to enter a church and join in its services ; any baptised person is entitled, further, to a participation in the rites of marriage and burial ; the Church is not a sect, and

therefore, does not refuse her ministrations to those who worthily and sincerely desire to have them. But this is not what you meant in your speech at Swansea. Taken in conjunction with the context, I understand you to mean that you have a right to apply Church funds to such uses as you please, and for this reason, that the Church cannot secure them for her own uses. They are given, you say, to the nation; and the idea that they were given to a certain corporation sole for certain specified purposes is a mere pleasantry—a legal fiction contrived by the State for the purpose of entrapping simple-minded Churchmen.

IV. You endeavour, however, to parry any such objection as I have now made by asserting that the title (if ever there was one) was broken at the period of the Reformation; and that we cannot trace our title to the old endowments further back than to the time of Henry VIII. You say at Llanelly that “the revenues of the Church which were appropriated by Henry VIII. were conferred upon the new Church or faith which he set up.” I confess that this assertion fairly takes away my breath. May I ask when and how Henry VIII. appropriated the revenues of the Church? And, further, when and how he conferred them on his new Church? I can only surmise that you have, somehow or other, made a confusion between the property of the monasteries and the property of the Church. Henry VIII. no doubt, deprived the monastic bodies of their properties, which included a certain amount of tithe; but this tithe had ceased for centuries to belong to the Church; and all that the Church had a legal right to demand was that the duties which the monastic bodies owed to the Church as the condition on which they held the tithe should continue to be performed by the future holders of it. But the existence of this condition did not constitute the Church the proprietor of the tithe itself. What act, then, on the part of Henry VIII. can you possibly mean? The only reference to tithe, as far as I remember, in the statutes of his reign, consists of an Act passed towards the close of it, which recites that through the lawlessness and disorders of the times

people had frequently evaded the payment of tithes ; and it then goes on to order that they should continue to be paid as heretofore. But there is not a word as to any change in the persons to whom, or the conditions on which, they were to be paid. I am, of course, aware of the Liberation theory that the continuity of the Church's life was broken at the Reformation. But this is the first time that I have heard of this argument being extended to the property of the Church. The question resolves itself into the simple question, Did the Clergy hold their property during Henry VIII.'s reign on the ground that they were corporations sole, or did they not?

V. Lastly, though you say that the Church as a whole has no corporate existence, you totally ignore this fact when you come to talk of the income of the Church. You enlarge on its enormous wealth, and throughout imply that the Church is responsible for the use and distribution of it. But the income of the Church really means the aggregate incomes of the separate foundations ; and the Church has no power of transferring the income from one foundation to another. This flows, of course, from the circumstances of its origin. Any man has a right to do what he likes with his own. If one parish has 1000*l.* a year (a very rare occurrence), and its neighbour 100*l.* a year (a very common occurrence), the Church has no authority to take from the one and give to the other. The State, as the great guardian of the rights of property, would at once interfere. This being the case, it is somewhat unfair to come down and tell us poor Welsh people that there is all this enormous wealth. Why did not you draw your illustrations from the places in which you were speaking? You came down here to urge the disendowment of the Church in Wales. You heard the representative of the Liberation Society, Mr. Fisher, state at Cardiff that the income of the parochial benefices in Wales was 229,989*l.*, to be divided between 954 benefices, and he admitted that it was a very small sum for the work that had to be done. That sum now serves for the maintenance of about 1250 working Clergy. At Cardiff, Swansea, and Llanelly the old endowments are

known to be ludicrously inadequate, and yet you make no reference to these, but flaunt your millions in the eyes of the Welsh people, and throughout assume that the Church is a corporation empowered to dispose of this wealth. Your statements seem to me to be honeycombed with fallacies from first to last.

CLERICUS.

IV.—TO THE REV. J. GRIFFITH, RECTOR OF MERTHYR TYDFIL.

REV. SIR,

It will be generally conceded that no one is better qualified than yourself to undertake the *rôle* assigned to you at the Liberationist meeting at Swansea. It was to pronounce the Church in Wales “a failure.” “An experience of forty years had convinced you of that”; and there is nothing equal to the knowledge gained by experience. But what some of us would wish to have heard from your lips is—first, the precise character of the failure which warrants in your eyes the application of so drastic a measure as the forfeiture of the property of the Church; and, secondly, how that measure will contribute to turn failure into success. Your observations, as far as they went, applied rather to disestablishment than disendowment; but you are aware that the latter is the point aimed at by the majority of the Liberationists, and that Disestablishment is, in their eyes, merely a means to that end. Very possibly you had intended to enlighten the audience on this subject. But the boisterous state of the elements seemed at one time too much even for one of Mother Carey’s chickens; at all events, it broke the thread of your argument, and left no other resource open to you than to rate the Ritualists, who, whatever else they may be, are not altogether a “failure.” By the way, allow me to remark, that you hardly did justice to yourself in the limited application you made of the allusion to Mother Carey, as emblematical of the pleasure you experience

in finding yourself engaged in some commotion or other. Far be it from me to question your claim to a phase of character on which you evidently pride yourself so much. But there is another phase in which you occasionally pose with great effect, namely, as the *Mater Cara* (for such is the true name which has been Anglicised into Mother Carey), the “dear mother” of the Church in Wales, always ready to shelter her under your wing, as you sit securely and majestically on the seething billow, watching with calm eye and gladdened heart the effects of the storm in sweeping away to a common destruction deans and canons, Englishmen and Ritualists, bishops and other such small craft, and, in short, everything and everybody except—the rector of Merthyr. Taken in this light, the image is truly sublime.

But now, descending from these serene heights to mundane affairs, let us consider the question in what respect the Church is such a “failure” as to merit the forfeiture of the means and appliances by which she carries on her work. There is, of course, a sense in which every earnest worker writes the sentence of “failure” against himself, and generally with the greater severity in proportion as God has blessed his work. And as with the individual, so also may it be with a whole Church. But this is not exactly the sense in which the matter now comes before us. Liberationists look at it rather from a commercial point of view. They draw up a debtor and creditor account—so much money given on the one side, so much result on the *per contra*, and so much balance against the Church; and they pronounce, as you yourself have pronounced, the Church a failure, and demand the penalty of a forfeiture of its funds. Now, I want to know in what particular item of the account the failure consists. Liberationists divide Church property into two sorts, viz., what has been given *by* the State, namely, tithe; and what has been given *to* the State, namely, lands, buildings, &c. It would require some care to ascertain the exact sums given in these separate ways. Dr. Roberts has, however, entered on the calculation, and tells us that the total revenue of the Church amounts to

about eleven millions, of which four-and-a-half millions arise from tithe. Thus, then, he allows that for every pound that has been given *by* the State more than two pounds have been given to the State. I neither accept his theory or his figures. With regard to the tithe, he seems to have forgotten the large amount which has been alienated from the Church; and with regard to the total income he has about doubled it. But I am quite willing to accept, for the sake of argument, the *proportion* he has given as between tithe and all other property besides tithe, and to say that for every pound the Church receives from tithes she has received two pounds from the other forms of liberality which Churchmen have adopted.

But now, to come nearer home—to Wales. What I wish to know is whether the “failure” is in regard to the funds given by the State or in regard to the funds given to the State, or, lastly, whether it is not rather in regard to funds given neither by the State nor to the State—in other words, to *deficiency*. Let me illustrate my meaning by a special case. Take the civil parish of Aberdare. This was originally included, along with Ystradfydwg and Llanwonno, in the huge parish of Llantrisant. In course of time a chapel-of-ease was built at Aberdare, and a portion of the income belonging to the mother Church was set apart to pay the Curate, amounting at the time of the Reformation to 2*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.*, as set forth in Henry VIII.’s *Valor Ecclesiasticus*. This munificent sum had increased by the beginning of the last century to 10*l.*, as we learn from the Bounty records. There are now, I believe, some ten churches in this area; a proportionate number of Clergy, say twelve; possibly, also, two or three parsonage-houses. The Liberationist takes stock of this national property, and finds (we will say) no fault with the administration. But then he ascertains that the population amounts to between 35,000 and 36,000, and he says:—

“Failure; you have not provided for the whole of the population; you must forfeit the sums you have already given for this reason—that *you have not given more*. The State gave you the original 2*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.* to provide for these 35,500 people. You

undertook to do it, and you have not done it. We, therefore, mulct you of the 2*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.*, or rather of its present value, *and also* of the thousands of pounds you have added to it out of your own pockets."

The history of Aberdare parish is by no means a singular one. With certain variations, it is the history of the Church throughout the whole of the South Wales mineral basin. In the year 1831 there were no more than about thirty churches and chapels in the whole district, including the seaports of Swansea, Cardiff, and Newport. A person might have driven on the old mail-coach from Neath to the Vale of Usk without seeing a single church except your own and the then newly-erected church at Dowlais. The population now gathered in the mineral district exceeds half-a-million. The sums expended by Churchmen have been manifold the value of the old endowments. But they have not sufficed. Granting that there has been failure, is it such a failure as warrants Liberationist treatment? Is it a case of having to make "bricks without straw," or is it a case of "Ye are idle, ye are idle"?

But let us enlarge the scope of our inquiry. I have endeavoured to ascertain the progress of the Church in Wales during the half century ending with 1881. I omit all reference to the enormous sums and the labour bestowed on the work of education, and confine myself to what is strictly Church work. I gather the figures for 1831 from the *Ecclesiastical Revenues Report*, and those for 1881 from the *Diocesan Almanacks*, and other sources. I must premise that they include Monmouthshire, and that, though I am obliged to start from 1831, the bulk of the work has been done since 1857. I find, then, that the churches and chapels in 1831 numbered 1044; in 1881 (licensed buildings included), 1422; that the number of benefices has increased from 851 in 1831 to 1007 in 1881; the beneficed Clergy from 635 to 920; and the Assistant Curates from 65 to 353. To these items we have to add the number of parsonages erected, for which I have no data at hand, but which has been very large. The restoration and enlargement of churches has

proceeded at a rapid rate, and has added very much to the increase of accommodation. The expenditure on this branch of the Church's work alone, including the additional churches, cannot have been less than a million and a half. The annual revenue has advanced from 155,000*l.* in 1831 to 232,748*l.* in 1881.

Now, there is nothing to boast of in all this (God forbid), but does it betoken "failure"? I speak more particularly in reference to those places where the Church has extended her borders by the foundation of new churches. Are these churches empty? Have Churchmen thrown away their money in the foundation of them? Even if they are empty, has the Liberator any right whatever to claim these properties as his own, and to say to Churchmen, "We mean to take your money from you because you have not put your hands deeper into your pockets to improve the national property"? Let us know what is the precise issue between ourselves and those who have so kindly come to assist us by sweeping away, or at all events claiming the right to sweep away, all that we have so laboriously gathered together.

Lastly, I should like to know how the Church's work is to be forwarded by this wholesale measure. But this is for the consideration of yourself and your friends rather than for us. Forty years' experience might, perhaps, resolve that problem, and I suggest that it is within your power to try the experiment by at once renouncing your endowments for your own lifetime, in which case the Church would be spared the irreparable loss which she would sustain if you were to disestablish yourself.

CLERICUS.

V.—TO THE REV. DR. REES, OF SWANSEA.

REV. SIR,

The Church will doubtless store up your address at the Swansea Conference among those “precious balms,” of which the Psalmist says “they break my head.” She cannot, I am afraid, carry on the parallel to say that you “smite friendly.” In order to account for the growth of Nonconformity in the nineteenth century you have deemed it fitting to unearth out of your own *History of Nonconformity* the scandals you find recorded against the Church in the three previous centuries. The growth of Nonconformity is really due to a combination of causes, among which the one you have selected for notice holds a very secondary place. If you thought it needful to mention one, you ought in common fairness to have mentioned all. Moreover, you have not dealt with this one cause in a fair and candid spirit. You have adduced bare facts without putting your readers in a position to judge of their significance by detailing the circumstances connected with them and their relation to the times in which they occurred; and you have attributed to the Church the wrong-doings of her individual members, even when the Church had set herself to correct them.

It is not, however, to your history, but to your statistics, that I wish on the present occasion to call attention. You profess to ignore the existence of the Church as a factor of any importance in the religious life of Wales. You say that the Welsh are a “nation of Nonconformists,” and you endeavour to establish your position by statistical evidence. For this purpose you adopt an *exhaustive* process of calculation: that is to say, you sum up all the non-Church elements of the population, and then leave the residue to the Church. Such a method is both precarious and unfair in a case where the various items in the account are open to question, and where no pains are taken to

test the validity of the conclusion by an observation of external and independent facts which may possibly be at variance with it. What indeed can be more unfair than to leave out of sight all the evidence that the body most nearly concerned in the inquiry has to offer? And what more inconsequent than to argue, as you have done, that “the Church *cannot* be more than one-seventh of the entire population,” when the “*cannot*” depends partly on unverified returns and partly on arbitrary assumptions? However, this is the method you have seen fit to adopt, and I propose to follow it out and see to what conclusions it may lead.

Your original statement was as follows:—“The population of Wales (including Monmouthshire) amounted in 1881 to 1,574,000, and from reliable statistics we are authorised to say that 1,100,000 of those are Nonconformists, including children of all ages in Dissenting families. We have thus 474,000 of the population to be divided between the Church, the Roman Catholics, and the non-religious masses, and there is ground to fear that this class amounts to from 200,000 to 300,000. Churchmen, therefore, cannot be more than one-seventh of the entire population.”

On my pointing out the indefiniteness of your conclusion, which might vary from one-seventh to one-fourteenth of the population, according as one took the lower or the higher figure for the non-religious class, you made your statement of a definite character by dividing up the 474,000 in the following way:—Non-religious 224,000, Roman Catholics 30,000, Churchmen 220,000.

Further, in reply to Mr. Hopkins’s request to know how you made up the number 1,100,000, you gave the following table:—

Congregationalists	.	.	276,201
Calvinistic Methodists	.	.	274,605
Baptists	.	.	200,000
Wesleyans	.	.	86,438
Primitive Methodists	.	.	19,382
Other Sects	.	.	10,000
			<hr/> 866,626 <hr/>

You then add:—"The above number does not include children who are too young to be reckoned as Sabbath School attendants, say under five years of age: but to a population of nearly 900,000 over 200,000 could probably be added, and that would make up 1,100,000."

I will first remark on the unreasonableness of calling upon Churchmen to accept as evidence against themselves returns which they have no opportunity of verifying. We know nothing about these returns: they may be correct for all we know to the contrary, but they are not before us, and we are, therefore, not bound to acknowledge their correctness. Your demand that the public should accept of such evidence against the Church is the more unreasonable, inasmuch as your own body, the Congregationalist, objects to any proposal for a general religious census. No one will contest either your right to object, or your wisdom in so doing: but those who are willing to submit to such a measure, if the Government should see fit to adopt it, may reasonably demur to having the *ex parte* statements of individuals or bodies forced upon their acceptance, and even proposed as the basis of important legislation.

But if you insist on making this demand, the least you could do would be to take ordinary precautions for securing accuracy in your use of such returns, and in the deductions you draw from them. I can see no trace of your having complied with these obvious conditions. There is hardly an item in your statement which is not open to correction. Allow me to point out the following errors:—

(1.) You have omitted to deduct from the Congregationalists the 7579 adherents who live outside the area of Wales and Monmouthshire.

(2.) You have similarly omitted to deduct from the Calvinistic Methodists the 24,861 who are in London, Liverpool, Chester, &c. or to make any allowance for the churches on the English border, numbering about 40, whose adherents may be estimated at 8,000.

(3.) You have placed the Baptists at the round number of

200,000, and you tell Mr. Hopkins that your figures are taken from official returns; but the Baptists issue returns of their members only, not of their hearers. Mr. Dillwyn's figures for them in Wales, viz. 144,307, are evidently obtained by adding together the numbers of the members and the Sunday scholars, which jointly make up that amount. For the correctness of his estimate it is necessary to assume that none of the Sunday scholars are members, and that is an assumption which cannot possibly be sustained in Wales, where the Sunday schools include a large number of adults. But even on this basis you have added nearly 27,000, in order to bring them up to your round number.

(4.) A similar observation applies to the Wesleyans, who do not (as far as I am able to ascertain) issue an official return of their hearers, exclusive of their members. It is indeed not very easy to ascertain with certainty the number of these latter for any given area, inasmuch as the Welsh circuits are mixed up with the English. I reckon them at 26,367, and, making the same allowance for hearers as prevails among the Congregationalists and the Calvinistic Methodists, it will be found that you have over-estimated the total force of the Wesleyans by some 26,000.

(5.) You have confessedly tacked on no less than 33,400 to your total number of Nonconformists, in order to bring them up to the round number of 900,000.

(6.) You have estimated the children under five years of age at one-fifth of the population, though they really are considerably less than one-seventh. Taking your round number of Nonconformists (which is already exaggerated by nearly 130,000), you bring it up to the further round number of 1,100,000 by an addition of 80,000 over the proper number of children.

(7.) You have made no allowance for increase of population from March 1881 to the autumn of 1882 (say eighteen months), to which the Nonconformist returns apply. This increase would be, perhaps, about 20,000.

How you have allowed yourself to commit such errors as I

have here noted is to my mind wholly inexplicable, inasmuch as you have yourself dealt with these returns and their several items in the recent edition of your *History of Nonconformity*, pp. 461, 462. The errors are, no doubt, the result of oversight; but, I ask, what value attaches to statistics so carelessly prepared as these? Your loose way of handling the returns tends to throw discredit on the returns themselves, inasmuch as it may be justly urged that if you, who may be the adviser of Mr. Dillwyn in the statistical department, exhibit such recklessness in your statements, what is to be expected of others on whom no such responsibility rests?

But to return to your figures. The true result of them, when corrected, is to about *double* the number which you have been pleased to assign to the Church; instead of 220,000 you should have said 445,000. But even this is not the true conclusion. All that your returns entitle you to say is that you claim between a half and three-fifths of the people as Nonconformists. I do not allow that claim, simply because I do not allow the correctness of your returns; but assuming that they are correct this would be the conclusion. As to the remaining two-fifths, which you do not even claim as belonging to your side, you are not entitled to break it up into non-religious and religious sections, for the simple reason that you have no evidence whatever to show what the non-religious section amounts to. Your estimate is purely arbitrary, as you yourself show when you first place it between 200,000 and 300,000, and afterwards definitely at 224,000. Your reason for so placing it is clear; it was just the amount of *padding* you required to fill up the interstice between the numbers assigned to the Nonconformists and to the Church respectively. You had fixed on one-seventh of the population for the Church, and so you placed the non-religious at 224,000. Similarly, if you had fixed on one-tenth for the Church, you would have placed the non-religious at 287,000. Nor would there have been the slightest difficulty in obliterating the whole body of Churchmen by the addition of some two or three fresh heads of account, and by still further enhancing the

amounts you have already given under the existing heads. While you have stated the numbers of these who go to *no* place of worship, you have omitted these who go to *any* place indifferently ; and if you place the former class at between 200,000 and 300,000 you may as well place the latter class at 100,000. Even now you may by such means repair the breaches I have made in your financial edifice, and in spite of all retain the Church at one-seventh of the population.

But there is a further observation to be made about this non-religious class. Granted that there are a considerable number of persons who do not attend a place of worship, is it to be assumed that these unfortunates have received no attention whatever from the Church, either in her parochial schools when they were young, or at their homes now that they are grown up? Are they to be placed wholly out of the pale of our common Christianity because they are not regular attendants, perhaps not attendants at all, either at church or chapel? I hardly think that you would go so far as to assert this; but what you wish is to detach them from the Church, and so to assume that they are not entitled to any voice in the question of disestablishment. They are, nevertheless, citizens, and as such, even if on no higher ground, they must be taken into consideration in a point which concerns every section of the nation.

Mr. Dillwyn's statement is evidently formed on the same lines as your own, though it differs in respect to area, inasmuch as it excludes Monmouthshire. The artificial character of both statements is shown in the fact that, though they differ widely in details, they agree almost exactly in their final results. Neither of you have stated the population correctly. Mr. Dillwyn makes it 16,000 too little, you 3000 too much; there is a difference of 19,000 between you again. Mr. Dillwyn places the age at which hearership begins at four years, you at five years; nevertheless you agree in deducting one-fifth of the population, though there is a difference of nearly three per cent. of the population in the numbers of children at those ages.

What does this variation in the ages show, but that there is really no established rule on the point, and that the returns may be made to mean almost anything? I certainly should have thought it most unlikely that a child of four or even five years of age would be designated a "hearer." This, however, is no concern of mine, further than as it presents a difficulty in understanding the returns.

Reference has been made by some of the speakers in the recent campaign to the Census of 1851, and with the usual amount of inaccuracy. Dr. Roberts is reported as saying that "in 1851, out of a population of more than twenty millions, less than three-quarters of a million attended the Church in England and Wales on the Census Sunday." I can hardly believe that the newspaper has reported him correctly, but I cannot suggest any explanation of the error. Suffice it to say that the population was under eighteen millions, and that the total number of attendances on the part of Churchmen amounted to considerably above five millions. Dr. Roberts then goes on to say that "the proportion of Dissenters to Churchmen in Wales was given at 7 to 3." This is a deduction of Dr. Roberts's for which the Census is not responsible. The Census only professed to record *attendances*; not the number of individual attendants, still less the number of adherents. The proportion which holds good in respect to the first of these does not necessarily hold good in respect to the two others, inasmuch as the number of attendances depends partly on the zeal and partly on the opportunities of the adherents. The attendance of Nonconformists in Wales on the Census Sunday was of an abnormal character. Churchmen may, therefore, with good reason decline to have their numbers measured by that standard. But these references to the Census of 1851 are not without their use, as tending to demonstrate the unreasonableness of your estimate of the number of Church adherents at the present time; for this implies that the Church has receded about fifty per cent. in the interval since 1851. This seems to me a pure absurdity; but no absurdity is too glaring to obtain credence if Mr. Dillwyn

really believes that between 1801 and 1851 the Church had retrograded 73 per cent., while Nonconformity had advanced at the rate of 960 per cent.—a statement the more egregious if Mr. Dillwyn had understood that it referred to the seats and not to the sitters in Church, as though the seats had walked out of the churches to the tune of 73 per cent.! Mr. Justice Williams, whom Mr. Dillwyn quotes, was himself mistaken in his version of the singular calculation made by one of Mr. Richard's statisticians, which was to the effect that in the matter of sittings the Church had "fallen short of its duty" by 73 per cent., while Nonconformity had "exceeded its duty" by 960 per cent., the whole comparison turning upon a transparent fallacy, arising out of the number of sittings possessed by the bodies respectively at the commencement of the period.

And this brings me to say a word as to the present number of your chapels, which you place at 4361. I should have abstained from making any remarks on this or any other number of chapels that Nonconformists might think fit to erect, were it not for the fact that the number is adduced to prove the strength of Dissent, and the consequent weakness of the Church. A comparison is implied, if not expressed, in this and similar statements as to the achievements of Nonconformity. To what extent the comparison would tell against the Church, if the inquiry were extended to the capacity, as well as the number of the buildings, there are no data at hand to show. Probably the result would be to modify very largely the impression conveyed by a comparison of the number alone. It is also much to the point whether the accommodation you have provided is really required for your own numbers. I should surmise that it was not, from the mere fact that you have a chapel on the average for about every two hundred worshippers, who might yield a possible attendance of one hundred and thirty at any given service. Either therefore the chapels must be many of them very small, or the accommodation very much in excess, or possibly these two conditions may co-exist. There is certainly a great excess of accommodation; for Mr. Fisher

assured his auditors at Cardiff that “if every State Church were removed out of the Principality there would be still room for every man, woman, and child in the Dissenting places of worship.” If this be the case, it seems not unreasonable to ask that all surplusage, both in the number of the buildings and in the accommodation they offer, should be knocked off before any comparison is instituted between the Church and Nonconformity. As regards the *number* of buildings, there can be no question that it is a sign of the *weakness* rather than of the strength of Dissent—that it arises mainly from the internal rivalries of the sects among themselves—that it has burdened Nonconformity with a fearful load of debt, amounting at the present time to above half a million sterling—and that it is wearying the people with the endless disquietude and rivalry to which it gives birth. I should not have considered myself entitled to make these remarks were it not that I am writing in self-defence. I desire to say no single word disrespectful to Nonconformity; I honour its work: I honour its members: but in this matter of chapel building I admire its zeal more than its discretion.

CLERICUS.

POSTSCRIPT.

TO THE READER.

Since my letter to Dr. Rees appeared, he has explained in *The Western Mail* that his historical statements to which I take exception in the opening paragraph were directed not so much against the *Church* as against the *Establishment*. He says (and I have no doubt of his sincerity in saying) that he loves the Church, that is, all godly people in the episcopal community, as “dearly beloved brethren”: and then he proceeds to say: “But I thoroughly dislike their union with the State, because I am convinced that it is unnecessary, unjust, and mischievous. I attribute all the immorality, the indolence, and the persecuting rage of the Clergy and Laity in the sixteenth, seventeenth and

eighteenth centuries, together with the bigotry and the sectarian exclusiveness of the present century, to the Establishment, and not to the Church."

In as far as this is intended to be a reply to my charge against Dr. Rees, I can only understand him to say that the purport of his address was to prove the evil consequences of an Established Church: whereas the subject that he proposed to himself and his audience was the "Growth of Nonconformity," and one of my complaints was that the *Growth of Nonconformity*, which has taken place (as he himself shows) almost entirely within the last 100 years, has but a very remote connection with the conduct of Churchmen in the three previous centuries. This objection has, I think, not been answered by Dr. Rees. Nor yet the further complaint which I made that he had not stated the facts with such fulness and fairness as would enable the public to weigh their significance. Whether it was the Church or the Establishment that he was attacking, it was equally incumbent on him as a historian to exercise a judicial impartiality in his statement of the facts. But it strikes me that Dr. Rees, instead of replying to my strictures, has opened new ground of debate by attributing all the weaknesses and errors of the past four centuries to the fact of the Church having been *established*. I have already reminded him, in a rejoinder which appeared in *The Western Mail*, that "persecuting rage" has been by no means confined to the Church: it was exhibited in a most marked degree by his own body, the Congregationalists, when they attained to power in New England. This indeed is acknowledged by Dr. Macfadyen in his address as Chairman to the Congregational Union in 1882:—"They too [the pilgrims of the Mayflower] made mistakes in realising their ideal. They confounded the civil and the sacred. They employed the power they possessed for the forcing of conscience." Persecution, indeed, has not ceased at the present day; as witness the mob violence to which the Salvationists have been exposed; yet no one charges this upon the Established Church. It has to be shown, therefore, that persecution, indolence, and immo-

rality are necessary concomitants of an Established Church, before Dr. Rees's argument is driven home. But Dr. Rees does not, I am happy to say, adduce these charges against the Church of the present day. What he has chiefly to allege against us is "bigotry and sectarian exclusiveness." Granting, for the sake of argument, that these faults are the characteristics of the Clergy, are they the necessary result of establishment? Their modern growth throws doubt on this conclusion. Dr. Rees himself states in his address to the Congregational Union in 1872 that:—"The Welsh Clergy of two or three former generations, were either decidedly Evangelical men, who co-operated heartily with their Dissenting brethren, or else quiet and inoffensive country gentlemen, who cared for nothing but their tithes and the respectability of their social position. The present generation of clergymen, with some worthy exceptions, are bitterly bigoted, narrow, and disgustingly sectarian in their spirit." I confess to deriving some comfort from Dr. Rees's description of the sort of Clergyman who did *not* exhibit the bigotry and exclusiveness of which he complains; because it suggests the possibility, that what appears to him to be bigotry and exclusiveness is the natural result of the Clergy having taken their own line and having shown vigour. I should agree with Dr. Rees that this change has taken place, and I can quite understand that he heartily dislikes it; but it does not follow that this new departure is the result of Establishment—still less, that it would be cured by Disestablishment. The general opinion, I believe, on the part of Churchmen is that Disestablishment would encourage the growth of sacerdotalism, by converting the Clergy into more of a caste than they are at present. I question, therefore, whether Dr. Rees is right in his conclusion. I also hope that he is wrong in his premisses, I mean as to the existence of this bigotry and intolerant exclusiveness. It is, of course, possible that Dr. Rees's vision may, imperceptibly to himself, be warped by his own professional temperament or by his intense hatred of the Establishment. But, however this may be, the Clergy will, no doubt, be ready to give respectful consideration

to Dr. Rees's criticisms. We may, perhaps, Churchmen and Congregationalists alike, join in the sentiment so happily expressed in the lines :—

O, wad some power the giftie gie us,
To see oursel's as ithers see us !
It wad frae monie a blunder free us
And foolish notion.

VI.—TO HENRY RICHARD, ESQ. M.P.

SIR,

In reply to the remarks of the Rev. Mr. Rhydderch at the Hirwain meeting, you are reported to have said that “a very large amount of the property in the possession of the Church is property which really belonged, at the time when it was given, to the Church of Rome. They were given in the time when the Roman Catholic religion was the established religion of the country. If the Government, therefore, has no right to alter the destinies of ecclesiastical property, what right has the Church of England to that property now? But, in point of fact, ecclesiastical property is national property, and Government has a right to dispose of it as it did in Ireland. If there is no such thing as a corporate body called “the Church,” to whom does it belong? To the Church? There is no corporate body called the Church that is put in possession of property.”

Your answer seems to me more ingenious than ingenuous. Its ingenuity consists in this: that you *suggest* to your hearers a justification for disendowment, which appealed strongly to their prejudices, and which you must have known would be converted by them into a substantial argument, while you yourself escape from being bound by it. And its disingenuousness in this: that you restrict your suggestion to a certain class of property without any reference to the remainder—you speak

only of the sums given (as you put it) *to* Roman Catholics; you say nothing as to the sums given *by* Protestants. Surely you ought to have added something to this effect:—"And as to those other sums which have been given by Churchmen of our own day, they (poor simpletons!) thought they were giving their money to the service of God and the saving of souls; they have founded churches in reliance on public faith and the sanctity of law; they will soon learn that their money has been given absolutely to the State to pay for ironclads or to apply to any other purpose it may select."

You say that Church property is *national* property. You do not go on to say *in what sense*, and to what extent, it is such. Property must, I suppose, be either private or public; and, if public, then in a certain sense national. But then, there are divers kinds of national property, and in this lies the whole gist of the matter. There is the property which the nation has acquired for its own uses out of its own funds, such as its ironclads, its public buildings, &c.; and there is the property of which the nation is the trustee, comprising all funds set apart for public uses, whether scientific, educational, religious, or charitable. Your assertion is that Church property falls under the former head—you say that the State is and always has been the absolute proprietor of Church funds in the same sense as it is the proprietor of its ironclads. You never so much as hint that there is another view to be taken of this matter—namely, that Church property belongs to the nation in the same sense in which other trust endowments belong to it.

You further say that the Church cannot hold property, and, therefore, has no property. You do not go on to say that every beneficed clergyman can hold property, and does, in fact, do so. I need not, however, enter again into a point with which I have already dealt in my letter to Mr. Illingworth. I will merely draw your attention to the fact that the State has never exercised the rights or duties of a proprietor of Church property. If a church has got out of repair, the State has not paid the mason's bill to restore it. If a church has tumbled down, or if

a farmer has refused to pay tithe, the State has never interfered. In all these matters it has recognised the proprietorship of Churchmen by allowing them to seek their remedy in a civil court if the case demand it, and otherwise by letting them take their own course.

You say that the endowments of the Church were given in the time when the Roman Catholic religion was the established religion of the country. Why, is it not notorious that our Welsh churches were founded at the very time when there was a complete breach of communion between the British and Roman Churches, as evidenced by St. Augustine's effort to bring the British Church into ritual conformity with his own? That breach had originated, no doubt, in the forcible separation of Christian Britain from Christian Europe by the interposition of the barrier of Saxon Paganism. But it continued for at least one hundred and fifty years after Augustine's time, during the whole of which period Church foundation was in progress. I have spoken of a breach of *communion*. Even had that breach not existed it does not follow that you are correct in your statement: for communion between Churches does not necessarily involve the idea of *subjection*. And yet this would probably be your definition of Roman Catholic times, that they were times when the supremacy of the Pope was recognised by the bulk of the community.

You say that in the times which you call Roman Catholic the endowments, if given to any religious body, were given to the Roman Catholics. You thus ignore the existence of a National Church, which has had a continuous life from the time of the unification of the various sovereignties comprised in England and Wales until the present day. Yet its existence is recognised over and over again in our Statute-book—in Magna Charta, for instance, where mention is made of the *Ecclesia Anglicana*, and of its rights, without any reference whatever to the Church of Rome; and again in Edward III.'s Statute of Provisors, which was passed for the express purpose of rebutting the pretensions of the Papal See, and which assigns as the distinctive note of

the National Church, not that it was subject to Rome, but that it was "founded in the estate of prelacy," as it still is. Nor did Henry VIII. or Elizabeth profess to claim any position with respect to the Church other than what their predecessors had possessed before them. "Her Majesty," we read in the Queen's Injunction on Supremacy, "doth not challenge any other authority than that which is and was of ancient time due to the Imperial Crown of this realm." And yet, in the face of all these declarations, you ignore the existence of the Church as a body politic, and assert that the endowments, if given to any body, were given to Roman Catholics. They were really given to the National Church, "founded in the estate of prelacy," and to that Church they still belong.

Liberationists are very fond of appealing to history in support of their policy : and for this reason, that they wish to disguise the fact that their real argument is that of *vis major*—the big battalions they can muster in Wales. If the contest really turned on history I have no question how it would end. And now I propose to place the public in a position to judge for itself as to the point at issue between us by producing the actual words of the deed of endowment of a church in Wales, founded in the reign of Henry I., premising that the Bernard Newmarch mentioned therein was the Norman conqueror of Brecknockshire, and Bernard the first Norman Bishop of St. David's. The original document in the Latin, of which this is a translation, has been recently published from Carte's Papers in the *Archæologia Cambrensis* :—

"Bernard, by the grace of God Bishop of St. David's, to all the faithful of the Holy Church of God, greeting and benediction. Let all, both those who are now living and those who shall hereafter live, know that when we consecrated the church of the Blessed Virgin Mary of Haye, William Revel did, by permission of Bernard Newmarch, who was present at the consecration, give and grant as a free gift and endowment of the church itself fifteen acres of land and two tenements, and all the land attached to those tenements in the high forest land as far as

the boundaries of Ewias, and in the coppice and in the low ground. He gave also to the same church all the tithe of all his estate of Haye in all things, as well as that of the lands of Ivor and Meleniac, and of all things that are held of the lordship of Haye. And that no question may arise in the future respecting the matter, he definitely gave tithe as follows:—Of corn, and hay, and poultry, and cattle, and sheep, and pigs, and wool, and cheese, and underwood, and the benevolence of Welshmen, and tolls for right of passage, and fees for plaints. Whoever shall substract or diminish aught from these, let him be cut off from the communion of God and His saints until he come to a better mind. Fare ye well.”

Liberationists will laugh at the fulmination in the concluding clause. Nevertheless it is worthy of their attention as showing that the church founders of that day relied for the protection of their endowments not on the civil but on the spiritual power. And that this latter was fully effective for the purpose is proved by an occurrence which took place in Wales shortly after the date of the above deed. I refer to the manner in which Giraldus Cambrensis enforced the payment of tithe on certain articles by the threat of spiritual penalties—a proceeding wholly inconsistent with the idea of State proprietorship, and consequently of State origination.

But to return to the document. To my simple mind it seems perfectly clear that the endowment of the church at Hay was given by a certain William Revel, with the consent of his overlord, Bernard Newmarch, to a particular church connected with the National Church, then, as now, “founded in the estate of prelacy,” as represented by the intervention of the bishop, and without any reference to the Church of Rome or its tenets. Such appears to me to be the tenour of the document. Still, this is a free country; and if any Liberationist prefers to say that the endowment in question was given *by* the State, and *to* the State, and to the Pope of Rome for Papistical purposes, and afterwards to the Protestants for Protestant purposes—and to assert these things without any proof whatever—I know of no statute which will prevent his doing so.

CLERICUS.

VII.—TO REES JONES, ESQ. OF CARDIFF.

SIR,

In your address as Chairman of the Liberationist meeting at Cardiff you “lay stress” on the words “by law established,” as applied to the Church of England. You proceed to say that it is by virtue of this quality of being “by law established” that the Church has become “a remarkable combination, partly religious, partly secular, partly civil, and partly ecclesiastical”; and you look forward to Disestablishment as the means whereby this combination shall be resolved, and a state of things be introduced “wherein a man’s religious belief should not subject him to any disqualifications whatever.” When asked by the Rev. C. J. Thompson to specify in what respect such disqualifications existed, you replied that “all preference means persecution”; and Mr. Illingworth, that “every Nonconformist was a tolerated being,” statements which certainly reveal the existence of an unhappy feeling within your own breasts, but which were no reply to Mr. Thompson’s question, unless the word “disqualification” be stretched considerably beyond its ordinary acceptance. Disqualifications do, in point of fact, exist; but they are directed against the Clergy, who are debarred from sitting in the House of Commons, from holding municipal appointments, and from entering on any secular business, all which a Dissenting minister is at liberty to do. One most certain effect of Disestablishment will be to remove these disqualifications. In what way this will tend to eliminate the “secular” and “civil” elements from the Church you yourself can best explain. I cannot pretend to know what you refer to.

But now to come to the point of this letter. It would have been interesting to know why you *lay stress* on the words “by law established”; in which case you would have necessarily explained what you conceive to be the meaning of the expression. There can, in reality, be no doubt as to what its meaning is

The word "law" does not mean *a* law, that is, any particular law, but *laws*, or law generally; and the word "established" does not mean instituted or set on foot, but *strengthened, secured, settled*. So, then, the full expression as applied to the Church means that it has been strengthened or secured or settled in regard to its position by the recognition accorded to it by the laws of the land.

I am quite aware that this is not the meaning popularly assigned to the expression. There is an ambiguity in the word "establish," and on this ambiguity Liberationists have largely and (as I hold) most unfairly traded. The word "establish" may, no doubt, mean to institute, just as when we talk of a man establishing a shop; and so it has been set forth that the Church was set on foot or instituted by some particular law, the repeal of which would reduce the Church to the same position as the Nonconformist bodies. But this is not only contrary to the true intention of the phrase, but also contrary to fact; inasmuch as the Liberationists, when challenged to produce the law by which the Church was established, fail to do so. "How many Acts of Parliament," asked Colonel Miers, at Swansea, "would have to be repealed in order to disestablish the Church?" And all that the chairman could say in answer was, that one Act would suffice to disestablish it, which was, of course, no answer to the question. Yet, if there had been a law by which the Church was established, the chairman would have had an answer ready to his hand.

What is the history of the expression? The earliest instance I can find of its use is in the Canons of 1603, where it appears as the equivalent of the Latin "*Legibus stabilita*," *i.e.*, *strengthened by laws*. These canons form no part of the statute law of the land, and therefore this notice does not pass for much. But the expression comes prominently forward in the Act of Union of England and Ireland, passed in Queen Anne's reign, and was evidently used for the purpose of defining for the future the particular Church referred to, namely, the Episcopal Church for England and Wales, and the Presbyterian Church for Scot-

land, each of which was to be regarded as the Church "established," or, as it is otherwise expressed, "preserved," "settled," "confirmed" by law for the respective countries.

The expression thus records a simple fact, viz. that the Church of England is recognised by the law of the land. If it be asked when this recognition of the Church first began to take place, I answer that it was from the time that "kings became her nursing-fathers and queens her nursing-mothers"; in other words, from the time that England became a nation. The union of Church and State in this country is not like a marriage, the precise year and day of which you can mention; it may rather be compared with the union of the Siamese twins—in that it is congenital.

And now, to show the bearing of this on the Liberationist argument. You propose to effect certain very important changes in the Church's position, which changes you sum up in the word Disestablishment. You endeavour to justify your proposal on the ground that the matters you wish to see changed are the creation of Establishment. But it is perfectly clear that they are *not* the creation of Establishment, but that, on the contrary, the fact that they are "by law established" implies their existence prior to such recognition. The word "disestablish," as used by Liberationists, is *not* the converse of "establish," as used in the phrase "by law established." "Disestablish" means in your sense to *uproot* what is planted; but "establish" does not mean to plant; it means to foster and protect what has been *already* planted. Let me illustrate the point by an instance or two. I imagine that the removal of the Bishops from the House of Lords is one of the most cherished wishes of the Liberationists. Well and good. But if you argue that they are there by reason of the Church being "by law established," I do not question that you are wrong as to the matter of fact. Bishops were members of the Royal Council some hundreds of years before Parliament was even in existence. Their right to that position is, no doubt, recognised by law, even though there be no express mention of it in any particular law. The men-

tion, if there is one, is merely the recognition of an existing fact. You cannot, therefore, claim to uproot this institution on the ground that it was planted at the time when you say that the Church was by law established. So, again, with regard to tithe. From the earliest times the right of the Church to tithe has been recognised by laws, and the Liberationist vainly tries to fix on one or other of these as the *originating* or *instituting* law; but each slips through his fingers as he attempts to grasp it—Offa's, Ethelwulf's, and half-a-dozen more that might be mentioned. The thing was there before the notice of it by the law; and the Liberationist has at last to fall back on the mere phrase, "by law established," which he distorts to a meaning it was never intended to bear.

But, perhaps, the best illustration of the fallacy is to be found in reference to the voluntaryism of the Church. Since the time the phrase was first coined, other religious bodies have been in certain ways recognised by laws; as, for instance, in respect to their buildings, their endowments, rights of marriage, and the status of their ministers. There is no Nonconformist body which is not, or, at all events, may not be *thus far* "by law established." The State recognises the rights of the various bodies to their property, and this recognition falls under the meaning of Establishment. But when the question of Church property comes under discussion, the Liberationist turns round and says, "It is only we Nonconformists who are entitled to this protection. We do not deny that you Church people have exerted yourselves and shown great liberality; but, then, you claim to be 'by law established,' and your voluntaryism must not be protected in the way ours is." What is this but to say, that the fact of the Church being protected, or rather the *assertion* of that fact, forms a justification why the Church should *not* be protected? Whenever the Liberationist summons to his aid the expression "by law established" he is really summoning a witness adverse to himself; for the phrase implies that the institutions which he asserts to be the creation of law were in existence before they were noticed by law.

The Liberationist claim to “disestablish,” in other words, to *uproot*, the efforts of Church voluntaryism, is so utterly at variance with the laws of justice and common sense, that I cannot conceive with what object it has been allowed to occupy so prominent a place in the programme. Possibly it may be intended to serve as a threat to reduce Churchmen to submission, or perhaps as an occasion for the display, at some future time, of Liberationist magnanimity in remitting a portion of their claim. Dr. Roberts intimated that, “in all cases where it could be clearly shown that the endowments were free gifts, they would not do anything to divert them from the purposes to which they were originally given, if those purposes continued practical under the altered conditions of the age.” I suppose we ought to feel duly thankful for this display of Liberationist clemency, tempered as it is by words which may nullify the whole proposal; at the same time it may be as well to remind Dr. Roberts that the results of Church voluntaryism are to the full as much “established” as are those of any Dissenting body. Further than that, Dr. Roberts is not authorised in his statement, for I find a very different view of the matter propounded in an article of the *British Quarterly Review* of October 1, 1876, which was understood at the time to have an authoritative character. After dealing with the ancient foundations by the absolute alienation of them from the Church—the cathedrals to be secularised and to be retained as national monuments; the parish churches to be handed over to representative parochial boards to be appropriated to such uses as they may select, and the parochial endowments to be similarly dealt with—the article proceeds to lay down the rules for the disposal of modern foundations as follow:—“Where the donors are living, the obvious course would be to give them the right of disposing of that which they had given, and the same privilege might be extended to their immediate heirs. Where the donors are dead, or where the churches have been built by subscription, there seems no better plan than to give the congregations the building, and probably the endowments also, or rather the surplus which would remain after satisfying

the claims of the patrons and the incumbents." If these conditions do not imply an interference with the uses to which the funds have been assigned, I know not the meaning of the words. But what I see further in these conditions is the begrudging spirit in which they are made, and that they are limited by considerations, not of justice but of feasibility. The buildings, and "probably" the small relics of endowment that remain after the claims of the patron and incumbent have been satisfied, may be given back, simply because even the ingenuity of the Liberation Society can find no other way of disposing of them. Cardiff people have all the materials at hand for the illustration of the programme aforesaid—Llandaff Cathedral, which has risen phoenix-like out of its ashes under the glow of modern Churchmanship—the old mother-church of St. John's, which has served the parish of Cardiff for some seven hundred years, and which is henceforth to be placed on a lower level than the daughter-churches, inasmuch as it will be a piece of parochial property—the scanty endowment of some 200*l.*, which has served as the nucleus of provision for the dense population now massed together in Cardiff—and the numerous churches which have sprung up, and are still springing up, in and about the town through the voluntarism of the Church. All this has to be revolutionised, and mainly on the ground that the Church is "by law established"!

But it is time that this series of letters, which has already occupied such an unreasonable amount of valuable space in the columns of *The Western Mail*, should be brought to a close. I trust that no apology is needed for addressing this one to your self, inasmuch as you expressed a wish that the whole subject should be thoroughly "thrashed out." In that wish I entirely concur, and my sole motive for writing these *Letters* is that the discussion should not languish for want of material. It is now some one else's turn to take the flail in hand, and apply it to them in order that the public may know how much solid grain remains after the chaff has been beaten out.

Allow me, in conclusion, to suggest that in the next campaign

undertaken by the Liberation Society it would be but fair both to the Church and to the nation that the issues should be presented in a clearer and fuller manner than they have been during the recent campaign. The Society goes forth to war with a banner bearing a double inscription—on the one side Disestablishment, on the other side Disendowment. In recommending their policy to the Church they present the former side of the banner, and tell us that they come with the most friendly intentions to “liberate” us from the thralldom under which we are groaning, and to set us on a course which will ensure us a larger amount of success than we have hitherto had. It is in this sense that the chairman of the Swansea meeting asserted that the cry of the Liberationists was not an echo of the fierce cry of the daughter of Babylon against Jerusalem—“Down with it, down with it!” The Society simply wishes us to accept the theory of the Congregationalists as to the relations, or, rather, the *absence* of relations, that ought to subsist between the State and religion. But the Congregationalists are well aware that their theory is viewed with hostility, or, at all events, indifference, by a large number of Nonconformists. They have, therefore, with great shrewdness, opened a new Cave of Adullam, with the view of enlisting recruits among those who are, on any account whatever, disaffected towards the Church; and to these allies the Society presents the other side of the banner, which bears the motto “Disendowment,” and she waves them on to the attack with the cry of the daughter, of Babylon, as it appears in our Welsh version, “Dinoethwch, dinoethwch”—“Strip her, strip her, even to the ground!” Now, what I have to suggest is, that on the next occasion the reverse side of the banner should be exhibited to each party—that the Liberationist leaders should undertake to prove, in the first place, to Churchmen, that the Church will be prospered in her work by the deprivation of the means by which that work is now carried on; and, in the second place, to prove to the more thoughtful section of the Nonconformist body, that the cause of religion will be prospered by the relinquishment of all formal recognition of it by the nation in its

corporate capacity, and by the diversion of the Church's endowments to secular uses. If the Church will not be benefited by Disendowment, then Liberationists should cease to represent Disestablishment as a friendly and beneficial proceeding. If religion will not be benefited by Disestablishment, then they should cease to hold out Disendowment as a bait to the disaffected.

CLERICUS.

POSTSCRIPT.

TO THE READER.

Since the publication of the foregoing *Letters*, it has been stated in *The Western Mail*, by Mr. Sidney Hartland, that the defenders of the Church in Wales have fallen into error on the subject of the Liberation Society's views as to Disendowment through a misapprehension of Mr. Illingworth's remarks at Swansea; and by way of correcting this error Mr. Hartland has produced a letter from Mr. Carvell Williams, the Secretary of the Society. If Mr. Hartland had done no more than this, there would have been no occasion to notice his communication, but he has volunteered an exposition of the letter, which seems to me not in accordance with the letter itself. He states on behalf of the Society that from a certain date (1818), "it is proposed to take away endowments of *public* origin only." But what does Mr. Williams say? "That all churches built after 1818 at the sole expense of any person living at the date of Disestablishment shall, on his application, be vested in him or in such persons as he shall appoint." What, then, becomes of the churches founded by donors who have died before Disestablishment takes place? Or what if the donors neglect or refuse to make application? In either case the churches will be confiscated. And then Mr. Hartland proceeds to say: "So that pro-

perty given by Mr. Llewelyn or any other person now living will not be diverted from the Church of England without the consent of the donors." Even if this were so, Churchmen have no reason to be satisfied with the Society's proposal; for they contest the right even of the donors to alienate property once given to the Church, and probably the donors themselves would be the most forward in maintaining this view. But is it strictly the case that the funds will not be diverted from the Church of England *without* their consent? The endowments, at all events, will be broken up: one portion will be given to the incumbent for his life-interest, another to the patron, and the balance (if any) to the congregation: the churches themselves will be given back, but subject to the obligation of repaying any sums contributed from public sources, such as a parochial rate; though the old parish churches, on which Churchmen have expended enormous sums, are to be handed over to the State free of any corresponding liability—a specimen of symmetrical justice which Churchmen are expected to duly appreciate: and though Mr. Hartland may not be himself conscious of any further change in the *status* of the property as resulting from the Society's proposals, there is really a change of the utmost importance, inasmuch as every single benefice is to be diverted from the Church of England, and to be re-settled on a Congregational basis either in the individual donor or in the congregation, who may at any time set the Church at defiance, or make their own terms with her under threat of secession. It may reasonably be assumed that the donor himself would not take this course, though such an event might occur in the case of one who had changed his religious views. But nothing is more possible than that his successors might do so, and still more that a congregation (as to the definition of which term we are not bound to agree with Congregationalists) might take such a course. I therefore maintain that Mr. Hartland is not warranted in giving us the assurances which he has founded upon Mr. Williams's letter.

But wherein consists the original error which Mr. Hartland

has stated to exist? The Liberation Society puts forth a claim, as of right, to the modern foundations equally with the ancient ones. Mr. Illingworth enunciated this view, in the most uncompromising manner, at Swansea. Mr. Richard, when interrogated at Hirwain, said not a word to the contrary. Mr. Carvell Williams, in his letter to Mr. Hartland, re-affirms the principle. The Society proposes to carry out the principle as far as the nation will permit it to do so. The private foundations before 1818 are to be swept away bodily; many of those subsequent to 1818 are to be dealt with in a similar fashion; and what the Society cannot confiscate it will endeavour to disintegrate. How much will be left of the modern foundations—whether a half or a third—it is impossible to estimate. This will partly depend on the time when Disestablishment takes effect. If it be delayed for twenty-five years from this time, there is no church built and endowed by a single donor now living which will not be confiscated. I am, in this, assuming that the Society honestly adheres to its own promises. But what guarantee have we that it will do so? A Society which urges the State to break faith with such of Her Majesty's subjects as are Churchmen will not scruple to break faith with them itself. It is the *principle* that we have to look to; that alone is fixed and certain; the *concessions* may be subjected to endless modifications. For my own part, I prefer Mr. Illingworth's blunt threat of wholesale confiscation to the insidious concessions of Mr. Carvell Williams, the meaning of which (as it appears) is very differently construed by Mr. Hartland and myself, and this not so much from what is said as from what is left unsaid.

I do not regret that Mr. Hartland has drawn attention to the Liberation Society's designs, inasmuch as it furnishes me with an opportunity of commenting upon them. It will be observed that the Society does not restrict its aims to the severance of the Church from the State, which is the proper object of Disestablishment, nor yet to the crippling of the Church's operations by depriving her of her resources, which is the proper

object of Disendowment; but that it further designs to avail itself of the opportunity afforded by these processes to force the Disestablished Church by legal pressure into the mould of Congregationalism. The whole machinery which the Society proposes to adopt is directed to this as the final end of its policy. Though reference is frequently made to Ireland as affording a precedent for Disestablishment, it must not be supposed that the precedent extends to the mode and measure of its accomplishment. The proceeding is to be carried out in a much more sweeping manner in this country. There is to be no *Representative Church Body* to give unity to the Church; that was the "great mistake," as the *British Quarterly* informed us in 1876, committed in the case of Ireland. No: the Church is to be reduced to atoms, and the State is to deal directly with the individual atoms. The reason assigned for this is that, according to the Society's views, the Church of England will be simply annihilated by the Act of Disestablishment: there will be no polity of any kind left to represent her: there may be certain theological parties or phases of opinion, such as are designated High Church, Low Church, and Broad Church, but these will have ceased to be linked together in a single Church polity. This is the theory of the Liberation Society as propounded in the *British Quarterly*. Accordingly, the Society sees its way to force upon the Disestablished Church the disintegrating system of Congregationalism. The churches built by single donors are to be vested in those donors; the churches built by subscription are to be vested in the congregations. The Church herself is to have no voice in the matter, but all is to be done for her according to the Liberation Society's views; and, by a refinement of mischievous ingenuity, the old parish churches—objects of affectionate regard to thousands of Dissenters—are to be converted into founts of perennial bitterness by being vested in Representative Parochial Boards, who will dispose of them, "for the general benefit," in such ways as may be determined. We may charitably hope that the framers

of this cynical proposal have not foreseen the effects which will certainly follow on its adoption. It will be, no doubt, a triumph for Congregationalism to see every parish church re-settled on its own basis. But it will be a triumph dearly bought at the expense of the peace—religious, civil, and social—of the whole nation. Such is the programme—Congregationalism throughout.

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